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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 001721

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/22/2018

TAGS: PREL PGOV TU EXBS

SUBJECT: TURKS INTERESTED BUT CAUTIOUS IN FURTHERING EXPORT CONTROL AND BORDER SECURITY COOPERATION WITH US

REF: ANKARA 950

Classified By: Pol-Mil Counselor A. Godfrey, Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: A 17-18 September 2008 Seminar co-sponsored by the EXBS program (State ISN/ECC) and the Turkish MFA highlighted opportunities for bilateral cooperation to strengthen Turkey's nonproliferation regime and engage with Turkey in outreach to promote stronger nonproliferation efforts in the region. MFA DDG for Nonproliferation Ahmet Muhtar Gun welcomed the US presentations, pledged to conduct an internal "needs assessment" to deconflict activities Turkey is undertaking with the EU, and promised a GOT interagency-agreed response to the various areas of possible engagement with the US. Gun emphasized the need for timely and accurate intelligence to ensure effective coordination in cases involving sensitive shipments, and urged the U.S. to press countries of origin to do more to prevent the shipment of proliferation-sensitive goods. End Summary.

Seminar Reinvigorates Nonproliferation Cooperation

¶2. (SBU) The 17-18 September EXBS seminar, co-sponsored by the International Security and Nonproliferation Bureau's Office of Export Control Cooperation (ISN/ECC) and the Turkish MFA, brought together fifteen US and over thirty Turkish officials with nonproliferation, export control and border security responsibilities. The seminar provided an opportunity following the conclusion of the bilateral nonproliferation agreement in June to present to the GOT interagency an overview of the EXBS program as well as other USG efforts to support international nonproliferation cooperation.

¶3. (SBU) MFA Deputy U/S Unal Cevikoz, who made opening statements along with the Ambassador, emphasized that the threats of terrorism and proliferation cannot be fought alone in a post-9/11 world. He said that Turkey needs to adopt a multilateral, holistic, and comprehensive approach to these challenges. He welcomed the conclusion of the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (or 123) Agreement and the bilateral Nonproliferation Agreement and called the seminar an invaluable opportunity for and a celebration of the cooperation between the two governments. Cevikoz expressed his hope that the seminar would help strengthen already strong bilateral cooperation in this field.
Ongoing Turkish CT and NP Efforts

¶4. (SBU) MFA Deputy Director General A. Muhtar Gun, who co-chaired the Seminar with ISN/ECC Director Yvette Wong, echoed Cevikoz's remarks, stating that international cooperation with the US, EU, NATO, OSCE and other countries and organizations is key to counterterrorism (CT) and

nonproliferation (NP) success. He stated that Turkey views the CT and NP challenge as going hand in hand.

¶15. (SBU) Gun highlighted Turkey's long-standing struggle against terrorism and its ongoing contributions in international counterterrorism and nonproliferation efforts. Gun specifically noted GOT contributions to the NATO mission in the Mediterranean under "Operation Active Endeavour" and its presence in the Black Sea as important deterrents to terrorism and regional proliferation. In his wrap up, Gun took the opportunity to express hope that improved US-Turkey intelligence sharing on the PKK threat would continue.

Passage of Export Control Legislation a Priority

¶16. (SBU) Gun said that his immediate priority is passage of draft legislation on foreign trade controls of dual use and sensitive goods currently with the Turkish parliament (reftel). He noted that even though the draft law is not yet in force, the Turks are already taking practical actions called for in the draft legislation, including regular meetings of the interagency Export Control Board (ECB). While welcoming the numerous possibilities for engagement presented by the US side, Gun stressed that Turkey will need some time to digest the information presented at the seminar, and said that Turkey will evaluate these options in the coming months, following the anticipated passage of the Export Control law and in light of ongoing cooperation with the EU, to determine the areas of bilateral cooperation that will be most fruitful.

¶17. (SBU) Turkish officials stated that the ECB, which first met in 2005, has streamlined the bureaucracy and led to improved effectiveness. Gun expressed hope that the EXBS Seminar would help reinforce Turkish interagency coordination. The ECB, chaired by the MFA, is comprised of representatives from the Ministry of National Defense, Customs Directorate, National Intelligence Agency, Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade (UFT), Ministry of Justice, Turkish National Police, Turkish Atomic Energy Authority (TAEK), and other relevant agencies (see reftel for ECB's role).

¶18. (SBU) Working-level Turkish officials from UFT, the Customs Directorate, and TAEK briefed the US delegation on ongoing Turkish efforts to fight terrorism and proliferation, and noted the extensive history of working with US agencies in strengthening their work. In its presentation, UFT highlighted their outreach to industry as a key component of their success in improving export control, and credited the US with assistance in Turkey's indigenous efforts to develop a commodity identification training program for customs officials. Turkish Customs noted the extensive work Turkey has already undertaken with the EU to ensure that Turkey's standards and practices were in line with EU standards as part of Turkey's participation in the EU Customs Union, including the placement of a network of x-ray equipment on all major border crossings with EU funding. Participating officials from both countries eagerly absorbed the information presented at the seminar on how their counterpart agencies do business in the export control area.

Call for Better Intel, More Equal Burden Sharing

¶19. (C) Throughout the course of the presentation, Gun noted the need for timely, accurate intelligence to allow Turkey to support US requests to stop proliferation-sensitive shipments. He also claimed repeatedly that Turkey does not produce high-end proliferation-sensitive technology, but has worked hard to prevent the transit of such technology from EU countries to countries of concern. Citing examples of EU countries asking Turkey to take action when there were opportunities to prevent problematic shipments while they were still in the EU, Gun urged the U.S. to do more to prevent such shipments at the country of origin, and called for more equal burden sharing in this effort.

US: Ready for More Intensive Bilateral Non-Pro Engagement

¶10. (SBU) In opening remarks, Ambassador Wilson echoed Cevikoz's comments on the entry into force of the 123 Agreement and hoped that the Seminar would help strengthen already strong bilateral cooperation on nonproliferation matters. The Ambassador noted that broad US interagency participation in the seminar reflected the importance the US attached to an intensified partnership. ISN/ECC Director Wong underlined US interest in receiving Turkish agencies' comments on US agency program presentations and in launching an active dialogue about potential nonproliferation-related joint activities under EXBS and related programs as presented by the US interagency.

Comment: The Way Forward

¶11. (C) We consider the seminar a successful first step in reinvigorating US-Turkey cooperation on export controls, border security, and nonproliferation more broadly. MFA's co-sponsorship of and the number of Turkish officials participating in the seminar reflects a new willingness to work with the U.S. on a bilateral basis on nonproliferation issues; this development became possible in large part due to the approval of the 123 Agreement in June and the overall improvement in bilateral relations since the commencement of intelligence sharing against the PKK. We anticipate the GOT will continue to focus its export control and border security efforts on harmonization with EU standards and practices, and will look to US programs as a means to supplement this work. As Turkey prepares to assume a seat in the IAEA Board of Governors in October, the proposed bilateral nonproliferation consultations at the DAS or acting Assistant Secretary level this fall would be a useful next step in our engagement.

¶12. (SBU) Participants:
Turkey delegation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
-A. Muhtar Gun, Minister-Plenipotentiary Deputy Director General
-Elif Comoglu Ulgen, Head of Department
-Ozkan Ilhan, Attaché

TAEK

-Aysun Yucel, Head of Nuclear Safety Department
-Anil Bolme, Head of Technology Department
-Ugur Bezdeguemeli, Expert
-Metin Koksal, Expert
-Hayri Akbiyik, Expert
-Muhammed Barik, Expert
-Nilgun Gerceker, Expert
-Belgin Onat, Expert
-Burcin Okyar, Expert

Customs Undersecretariat

-Ender Gurleyik, Head of Office of Customs Enforcement
-Mesut Ugur, Chief of Section
-M. Fatih Karabulut, Assistant Customs Expert
-Mehmet Uylukcu, Expert-Customs Directorate General
-Adem Ogultarhan, Expert-Customs Directorate General
-Ibrahim Atasoy, Expert-Customs Directorate General

Turkish National Police

-Kanbi Apaydin, Superintendent
-Zafer Akkus, Superintendent
-Mehmet Yucel Karahasanoglu, Superintendent
-Erdal Argin, Inspector

Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade

-Cigdem Samiloglu Erkoc, Expert

-Hacim Kosaoglu, Engineer

Prime Ministry Security Affairs

-Huseyin Yildiz, Expert

-Yasin Albayrak, Assistant Expert

-Sezgin Hatipoglu, Assistant Expert

National Intelligence Agency

-Murat Tukel, Expert

Turkish General Staff

-Lt. Colonel Hakan Ozbulbul, Officer

-Asude Guler, Expert

Ministry of National Defense

-Muammer Kosaci, Expert

-Aygul Yumurtaci, Expert

Coast Guard

-Captain Tayfun Sargin, Officer

US delegation:

-Yvette Wong, ISN/ECC Director Office of Export Control Cooperation

-Brett Golden, ISN/ECC Program Manager for Caucasus and Black Sea

-Rebecca Joyce, DOC/BIS Executive Officer, Office of Nonproliferation and Treaty Compliance

-Loretta Weiss, DOE/INECP Loas Alamos National Laboratory

-Bobby Picket, DHS/CBP EXPS Program Manager and North African Regional Team Lead

-Shewit Habtemichael, DHS/USCG Non-Proliferation Programs Manager

-Eric Deschler, DOE/SLD Project Manager

-Jake Mentz, ISN/NESS Foreign Affairs Officer

-Lt. Colonel Bryan Lee, DOD/DTRA Chief Counterproliferation Branch

-Lt. Colonel Stephen Bruce, DOD/DTRA Chief Strategy Section, Security Cooperation Branch

-Brent Eastman, ISN/WMDT National Security Analyst

-Dave Froman, EUR/ACE Security and Law Enforcement Officer

-Jim Stitzel, DHS/ICE

-Jane Purcell, ISN/CPI

-Chris Rich, Deputy Chief/Political-Military Affairs Section, US Embassy Ankara

-Robert Cieslinski, EXBS Advisor, US Embassy Ankara

-Robert Lee, Political-Military Affairs Section, US Embassy Ankara

-Kevin Cummings, TDY EXBS Advisor, US Embassy Ankara

-Kris Keele, Political-Military Affairs Section, US Embassy Ankara

-Christian Oslund, Political-Military Affairs Section, US Embassy Ankara

-Erhan Mert, EXBS Coordinator, US Embassy Ankara

¶13. (SBU) ISN/ECC has cleared this telegram.

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WILSON